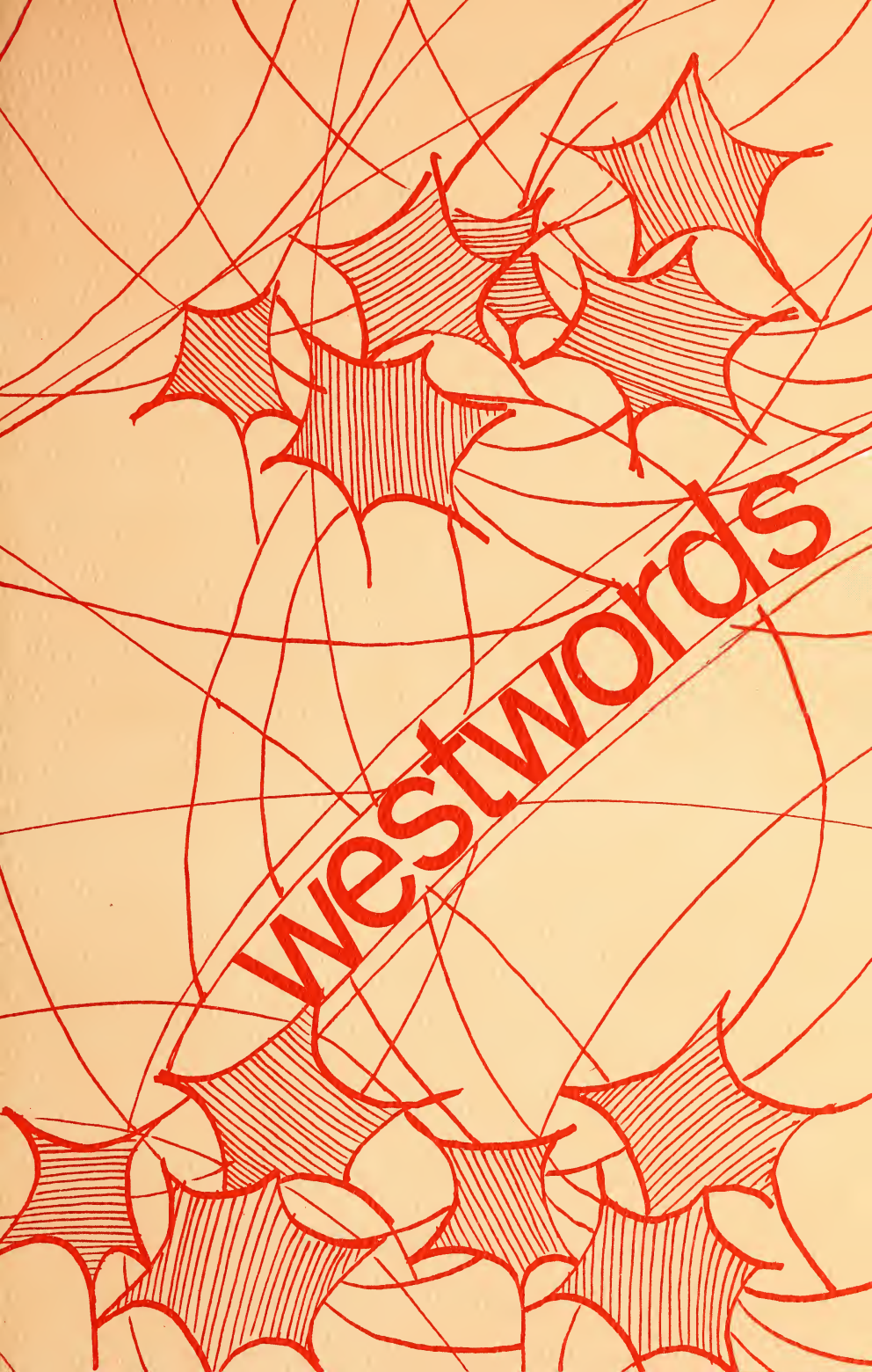
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Editor's Note

Autumn is a season of gentle and subtle movement – the lazy downward spiralling of a leaf from a flame colored tree, a fluid curl of chicory smoke from a hobbit pipe, and dandelion fronds floating in a quiet wind. It is also a season of myriad colors . . . . warm oranges and sun yellows mingling with earth browns and grays.

The poems and stories in this issue of *Westwords* seem to echo this feeling of warmth and promise as the earth and nature reflect back on the fulfillment of a summer harvest and ready themselves for the quiet white months to come.

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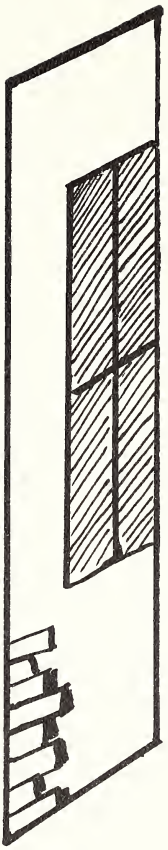

Spirits' Bone House

Self – awareness breeding mystery
You grasped through tight-meshed barbs of pain
Bound yourself to yourself
Struggling to hold, imprison it
Through years of stop-stalk-leap-go back
Until you won and came away half-gone
Scarred, pyrrhic veteran,
Haunted by the ghost no-one you were
Your nerve-ends all connected to the wall
You built once, laughing
Between you-then, you-now.
Never knowing till too late,
You never should have started out
(contradiction – isn't it?)
In the days before you were you

NORAH CUNNINGHAM

Little Hope: Pop Poem

Little Hope Seen for Most Obese Children

Approximately 80%
of the obese children
in the United States
will never
be anything but
obese
a scientist told a symposium
Monday.

"That's the way they've been taught
to live,"
said Dr. Stanly M. Garn.

"Just like ordinary boys and girls,"
Garn said,
"obese children want
to date.
They want to be more active
and when they find
they're not so attractive
they have to find
solace
and reward themselves
somehow.
This they do by eating."

"Just like ordinary
boys and girls," Garn said,
"obese children
want to date. They want
to be more active . . . . "

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will never be anything
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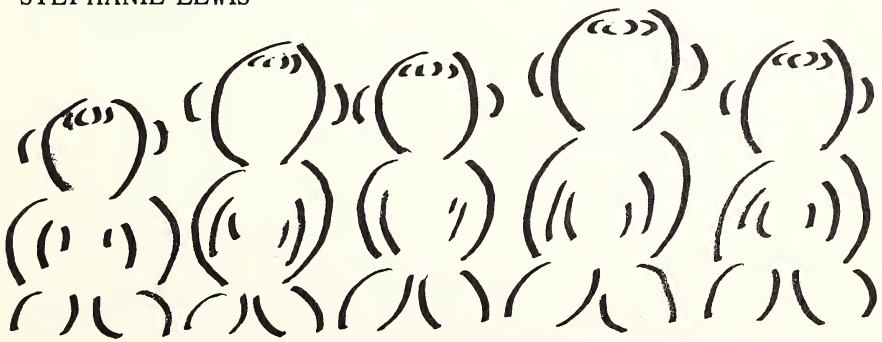
"And when they find they're not
so attractive
they have to find solace and reward
themselves somehow."
"That's the way they've been
taught to live . . . . "

Little Hope Seen for Most Obese Children
Little Hope . . . .

STEPHANIE LEWIS



Dandelions

Dandelions, sunfuzzy and plush,
throw back their frilly, fringed heads
and roar in laughter at the dancing sun.

Splattered helter-skelter over a bumpy hill,
they bat at spilt sunbeams
that streak the apple-tart green sky.

And while the young dandies cavort in the sun,
old dandelions, tall puffs of wonder, stand guard,
whispering in a sea of green tassels.

Their mellow gold manes, now ash-white,
toss free in the whistling-wry-winds
and slide down sunbeams that streak the
apple-tart green sky.

LAURIE BRASS

Shadow To Smoke

SISTER MARTIN EILEEN

Shadow and smoke often strangely relate in J.R.R. Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings* (Ballantine, 1965). The fantasy trilogy describes the Great Shadow of Mordor cast over all of Middle-earth by the Dark Lord, Sauron. He seeks power through One Ring to "rule them all and in the darkness bind them" (I, Title Page). But the Ring is acquired and ultimately destroyed by a hobbit, Frodo Baggins, whose main concern is not power but home, comfort and security. The images connected with hobbits relate to home life and security and one of these is smoke, pipe smoke. In the story of Frodo's journey to destroy the Ring, Tolkien intertwines the conflicting worlds of evil and good, Sauron and hobbits, in relating and contrasting shadow and pipe smoke.

Smoking occurs in seven major scenes of the novel, and there are several additional references to pipes and pipeweed. Each incident of smoking illustrates the relationship of smoke and shadow in a different way. This difference is particularly clear in four places – the first

mention of smoke, in the Shire; then at Moria, Isengard and finally, Gondor. Whenever smoking is mentioned it is in sharp contrast to its surrounding shadow atmosphere.

"Smoking is the one art hobbits can certainly claim to be their own invention" (I, 29). It is an apt symbol of these very small, round people who like to "laugh and eat and drink, often and heartily, being fond of simple jests at all times and of six meals a day" (I, 20). Hobbits like to stay at home and have a good time. Their world, the Shire, stands in one quiet corner of Middle-earth, protected by elves, dwarves and men. They love peace and good tilled earth – not the wars and adventures of the big folk – so that smoking is an appropriate sign of their way of life.

They pursue this way of life untroubled by Sauron until he realizes that hobbits are somehow connected with the Ring. Then his desire to enslave them and revenge the loss of his Ring hangs over the Shire in the brooding uneasiness of his Shadow. The first to sense this Shadow is the wizard, Gandalf. He comes to Bag-end, Frodo's home in the Shire, to tell him that the ring Frodo keeps is the One Ring. As Gandalf relates the history of the Ring and the great desire of its maker to regain it, Frodo is oppressed by shadow. Fearful for the Shire and for himself, Frodo realizes he must do something about the Ring.

Tolkien introduces this scene with smoke. Gandalf "smoked and blew smoke rings with . . . vigor and delight" (I, 76) while unburdening his dark tidings. And at the end, "Gandalf sat down again and puffed at his pipe, as if lost in thought" (I, 95). This conversation which introduces the plot of the novel, explaining Frodo's job as Ringbearer, is wreathed in pipe smoke. Throughout the scene, the relationship of smoke and shadow is a contrast between the warm comfort of Frodo's living room, filled with pipe smoke, and the threatening reality of the shadow of Mordor.

Gandalf relates shadow and smoke in his own person because he is interested in the worlds of both Sauron and hobbits. He is counsellor to the leaders of Middle-earth and knows the treacheries of Sauron. Ultimately, it is the cloaked, bushy-browed Gandalf whose staff guides the forces against Sauron in the War of the Ring. At the same time, he has a special relation to hobbits, for he is the only one among the Wise who "goes in for hobbitlore" (I, 78). His interest in hobbits has led his to take up their unique pipe-smoking pastime. The smoke of Gandalf's pipe intrudes upon Sauron's shadow in the comfort of the Shire, just as Gandalf himself is a challenge to Sauron.

Gandalf's news makes it evident to Frodo that he must leave the Shire. Frodo offers to assume the Quest to bear the Ring to Orodruin, to destroy it in the fire that forged it. Eight companions travel with him –

three hobbits, Sam Gamgee, Meriadoc Brandybuck and Peregrin (Pippin) Took; one dwarf, Gimli; the elf, Legolas; two men, Boromir and Aragorn; and Gandalf. To accomplish their quest, these members of the fellowship of the Ring are faced with the necessity of travelling through the dread mine of Moria. Here pipe smoke introduces itself again, in contrast to shadow.

Moria plunges deep into the earth, pronging its lode lines and delvings into the heart of the Misty Mountains. When the Lord Durin walked its halls, Moria contained the great realm and city of Darrowdelf, full of light and splendour (I, 411). But now,

> The darkness dwells in Durin's halls;
> The shadow lies upon his tomb
> In Moria, in Khazad-dum (I, 412).

This shadow grasps the company as they grope their way, "troubled by the mere darkness in itself" (I, 405). They feel surrounded by evil.

Their mounting tension culminates in the unwise daring of Pippin, who impulsively tosses a stone into a cavernous well. Gandalf's rebuke, " 'This is a serious journey, not a hobbit walking party' " (I, 408), recalls life in the Shire. It is followed by an even stronger image of Shire comfort and security as Gandalf realizes, " 'I know what is the matter with me . . . I need smoke!' " (I, 409).

> The last thing that Pippin saw, as sleep took him, was a dark glimpse of the old wizard huddled on the floor, shielding a glowing chip in his gnarled hands between his knees. The flicker for a moment showed his sharp nose and the puff of smoke (I, 409).

The fear gripping the company is arrested through this simple action of Gandalf because smoke is a sign of the security of the Shire. For this brief while, they are together and safe. They can relax and let Gandalf's smoke challenge the heavy shadow of Moria.

Members of the company are parted in later adventures and the novel winds in and out of their separate experiences. While Frodo and Sam set out for Mount Doom, Merry and Pippin come, by a series of events, to Isengard. Pipe-smoking appears unexpectedly at Isengard and again opposes shadow, this time the shadow of destruction.

Shadow at Isengard comes from the ruin of the city itself and also from defeat of its master, the wizard Saruman. Saruman casts a shadow imitative of Sauron's, in lust for the Ring. He makes the fortress-city a tool for his selfish purposes, directing huge furnaces and smithies in caverns far under Isengard. His dark lust for the power of the Ring looms as a shadow over Isengard until it is destroyed; and its very destruction becomes a shadow.

The huge Ents, shepherds of trees, destroy Isengard. They revenge

themselves on Saruman "tree-killer" (II, 220) by cracking and gnawing at the great stone walls of Isengard until the rocks splinter into jagged heaps. The Ents change the course of the River Isen to flood Saruman's furnaces, and this quenching of the wizard's fires raises a "vast spire of smoke and vapor" (II, 200) that spreads over Isengard as herald of ruin. This great shadow makes Isengard look "like a huge flat saucepan, all steaming and bubbling" (II, 225). Because of the Ents, the shadow of destruction looms over Isengard in grey witness of the evil deeds of Saruman and of his defeat.

Amid all the wreck, Merry and Pippin (assigned as guards) concoct a banquet. They crown their feast with a pipe-smoking session using longbottom leaf from their home Shire, a treasure salvaged from Saruman's debris. Pippin "leaned back against a broken rock and sent from his mouth long wisps and little rings of thin blue smoke" (II, 206). The shadow of ruin confronts the harmony and gaiety of the hobbits' smoking party. On the one hand is Saruman's defeat in a desparate struggle for power; on the other is the hobbits' triumph in bringing the pleasures of home to the ruined Isengard. Pippin's pipe smoke represents joyful harmony against the chaotic disaster of the smoking wizard's vale.

Not long after the wrecking of Isengard, the Dark Lord sends his forces against Gondor, city of men, in the great battle of the War of the Ring. His shadow covers all the land like a great pall, blocking out the light of day. At Gondor, pipe smoke opposes this death shadow, which seems of itself to have deadly power. It depresses men, gnawing at their courage. The Shadow is personified in the leader of Sauron's forces, whom Gandalf identifies as "King of Angmar long ago, sorcerer, Ringwraith, Lord of the Nazgul, a spear of terror in the hand of Sauron, shadow of despair" (III, 112).

But the Nazgul dies, and his downfall is partly the work of the hobbit, Merry. Because he stabs the Nazgul, Merry is sickened by the malady called Black Shadow. "Those who were stricken with it fell into an ever deeper dream and then passed to silence and a deadly cold and so died" (III, 165). This death is not the fate of Merry, however, who returns from shadow. Very much alive, he treats the miracle of his cure lightly. Though he is honored, and practically offered the kingdom, he requests only " 'supper first, and after that a pipe' " (III, 177). Merry's astonishing request hints at the reason he is able to recover from the Black Shadow. He is not corrupted by the power that shadow stands for, but is interested only in the life signified by his pipe. Merry's pipe contrasts with shadow in this scene as simple life does to deadly power.

Pipe smoking brings out a contrast to shadow wherever it occurs. Evil and ambition unmasked in the Shire; fear apprehensive at Moria;

ruin at Isengard and death at Gondor, all meet their opposites in the domestic simplicity of hobbits. Pipe smoke stands for hobbits – against threatening shadows. Thus Tolkien relates shadow and smoke to concretize the strange and delightful contrasts of his story.

The Cat Tale

In a small shaky house at the north end of town
With a twisted white fence about to fall down,
Lived a wrinkled old lady, who the folks thought,
Was as crazy as catnip, more likely than not.

She wore a green dress and a shawl that was gray,
And on her feet tennis shoes, torn into fray,
She was small and rotund, but on top of all that,
She had an odd hobby . . . collecting stray cats.

In the beginning she had only four,
But cats will be cats; soon there were more.
Ten, twenty, then by dozens they came,
And the shaky old house shook to its frame.

There were fat cats and thin cats, spotted and striped.
Tom cats and tabbies, and some that she swiped
From doorsteps and alleys, and heaven knows where.
Anywhere they were, she'd also be there.

There was Rufus and Alphonse, each had a name
That suited him best, or so she did claim.
There was Shamus the cat with the Irish green eyes,
And Malifiscent the one you'd surely despise.

Soon there were hundreds; there were cats everywhere,
Cats on the sidewalk and on the front stair.
The folks in the town began to complain:
"She has too many cats, she can not be sane!"

They tried to explain that her cats had to go.
But she always retorted emphatically, "No!"
So they warned their children not to go round
The old lady's house at the north end of town.

Then they decided there was only one way,
They'd have her committed. So one windy day
A white suited stranger with a doctorly frown
Went to that house at the north end of town.

"The town folks tell me you talk to your cats,
But what I want to know is do they talk back?"
She assured him they did for that was their way.
"Oh, that's fine, now just what do they say?"

"What an odd question, I thought everyone knew,
Just like dogs barked, just like birds flew.
What do they teach nowadays in your school?
Why they say Meow . . . you silly young fool!"

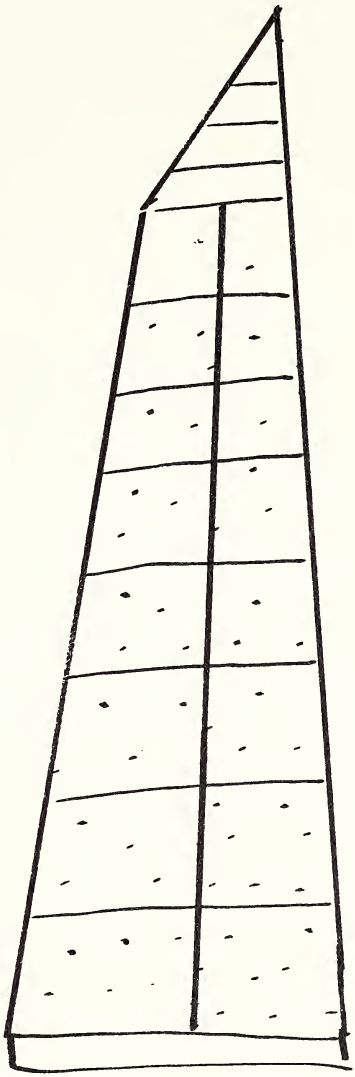
"She's more sane than we are," they all heard him say.
"With an answer like that, I can't take her away!"
And so all the kittens and cats still abound
In the small shaky house at the north end of town.

DEBBE BOTTOMS

Me Day

Today is a sea day
a be day
a day to walk along the sea
in the sea
to feel the cool swish of sandy sea
between my toes and the salty sea air
in my hair
to smell the clean moist-ness of sea
travelled seaweed
it's an alone day
a nice day to be alone
quietly
happily
peaceful sea day
to be me day

SHARON SMITH



The Sneeze of Silence

The moon laughed
a mellow chuckle
that gurgled and burbled
causing shell-faced people
to stop stepping on step
and look up from the cracks.

tk,tk,tk, tk,tk,tk, tk,tk,tk, tk
tittered the Grandfather clock
then the whole bubble world exploded
causing pepper pods to fall from trees
and crack on cement.

Two billion black ants stopped jumping cracks
and sneezed in one black chorus
the sneeze of silence.

LAURIE BRASS

Genesis

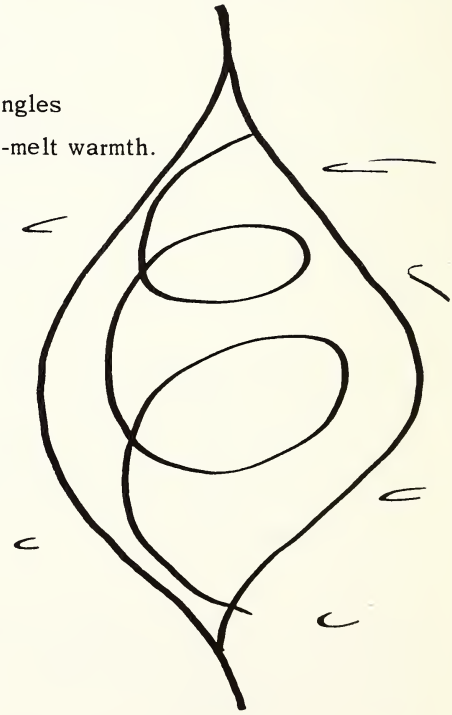
"Then God said, 'Let the earth
bring forth vegetation' . . .
and so it was." Genesis, I, 11.

A liquid
a laughing liquid caldron
a shaking, laughing dripping spill of yellow
on a new-blue circling sphere.

A confusion
of colors
patterns, prints, oval triangles
squarely circle the butter-melt warmth.

Blue-yellow, yellow-blue
Green.

TERI KEELER



Whalebone Clouds

Here in the carved shadows
    Is the inlet of our retreat.
Bottomless black elbows
    A fading blue, until we greet
The nothingness only night can bring.
We stand on the axle of a rolling

World, a deep world streaked by
    Current winds and whalebone clouds.
But man, like a drop of rain
Poised on a flowered stem, remains
    A motionless twig, caught in a sigh
For one bold moment, empty of crowds.

Even a gull pauses in flight,
Gliding mid-air in free delight.
    So man lives like a sand-filled toy,
Anchored to earth yet wanting to stay
    Lost in still night, to joy
In the ocean of a single day.

JOYCE HAMPEL

A Hobbitual Spectrum

JOYCE HAMPEL

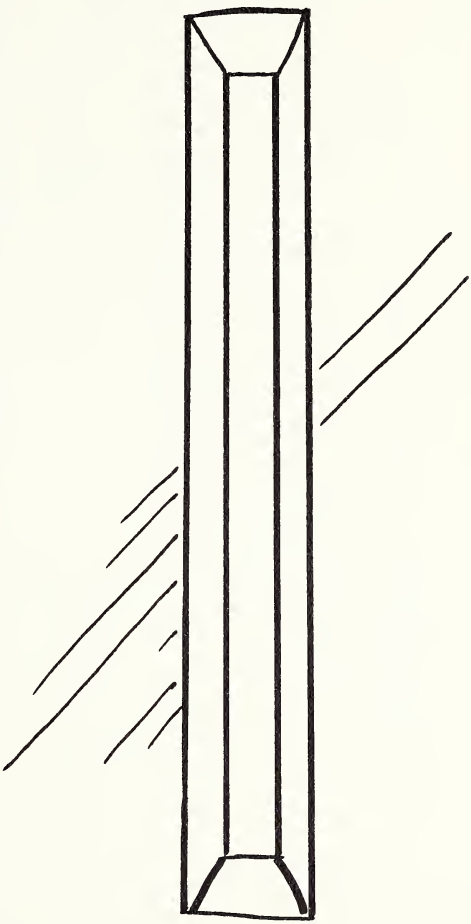
For still there are so many things
that I have never seen:
in every wood in every spring
there is a different green.

A single beam of light passes through a glass prism, and suddenly visible bands of color appear. Some are bright, some are dark, but all are different. In J. R. R. Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings* (Ballantine, 1965), Frodo Baggins, a hairy-footed hobbit from the Shire of Hobbiton, finds that he possesses the One Ring, ruler of all the Rings of Power. It is the Third Age of Middle Earth, and Frodo must assume the responsibility of saving the world by taking the Ring to the flaming crevices of Mount Doom, where the same forces that made the Ring can destroy its power forever. During his journey, Frodo passes through the worlds of hobbits, elves, dwarves, and wizards each distinguished by different colors. Just as a prism separates the different colors of light, so these lands represent the degrees of understanding and changing moods in Frodo's life as he comes to recognize external change, inner reality, and personal growth. Through this realization, Frodo's quest is fulfilled, and the world once again finds hope.

As the story begins, Hobbiton is alive with the excitement of a party, and the entire Shire is bursting with color. "There are green trees with trunks of dark smoke: their leaves [open] like a whole spring unfolding in a moment" (I, 51). Fireworks fill the sky with a "red thunder-storm and a shower of yellow rain," and a glowing dragon of light spouts "green and scarlet flames" (I, 52). Everyone in the Shire has come to celebrate Bilbo Baggins' eleventy-first birthday. It is all

so wonderful that no one thinks it strange when Bilbo suddenly disappears. "Nothing more than a ridiculous prank" (I, 56), they all say, but Frodo, Bilbo's nephew, knows it is more serious than that. For soon afterwards, the wizard Gandalf tells Frodo that he is heir to the Ring, and the one who must bring its power to an end.

The colors and atmosphere of the Shire reflect both the reason for the quest of Frodo, and his own potential growth. The green of the trees parallels the anticipation Frodo experiences when Gandalf names him heir to the Ring. He is alive with the newness of this understanding, just as the trees are filled with the greenness of spring. The attention of the Shire folk, however, is captured by the brilliant fireworks display, which stands in sharp contrast to the natural colors of the plants and sky.



The fireworks are unusual because the Shire is unusual. The flashing lights are man-made, and therefore unreal; the Shire, too, is man-made, but also man-sheltered. It is safe, secure, and independent, knowing practically no evil. In that pleasant corner of the world, the hobbits "plied their well-ordered business of living, and they heeded less and less the world outside where dark things moved . . . until they ceased to remember it" (I, 24–25). This is the reason for Frodo's quest. Few people in the Shire realize that there is something else outside their own little world to be experienced. But the Ring *is* real. It is a symbol of what is outside the Shire, and the evil that is threatening to invade its peace. Frodo alone is beginning to see this reality, but his understanding must deepen before he can accept it.

After Gandalf tells Frodo the story of the Ring's power, he warns the hobbit that the Ring must be taken far from the Shire. Evil forces

seek to regain it and Frodo must keep it from then until it can eventually be destroyed. In response to this explanation Frodo leaves the Shire, still uncertain about his destination, and travels through the Old Forest of the Elves.

The Forest is cool and inviting, and offers Frodo a security like that of his home in the Shire. But as he travels deeper into the trees, toward the elf-city of Rivendell, he senses a change in the very atmosphere of the woods. Stopping under an elm tree, he gazes upward and sees that "its leaves though fast turning yellow [are] still thick, and the ground at its feet [is] fairly dry and sheltered" (I, 130). The first thing Frodo notices is the changing color, and again it has a two-fold significance. The people of the Shire were opposed to change, and before Frodo can proceed on his journey he must cast aside all fears about the changing world outside his home. He must accept a world that is always moving and the yellow leaves of the Old Forest aptly symbolize the different kind of life he is facing.

The Old Forest is also a reflection point in Frodo's life because it represents past and present, safety and danger, all at the same time. The ground is "dry and sheltered" offering Frodo temporary peace of mind, but the yellowing leaves fade as surely as does his security. Frodo soon learns that the danger awaiting him outweighs the safety. His future peril is briefly foreshadowed when a sudden wail pierces the silence followed by the returning stillness, and Frodo is "reluctant either to stay or go on" (I, 131).

Though he is at first frozen with fear, Frodo begins to realize the seriousness of his quest. He is now far from the protection of the Shire, and he must decide between going back or forging ahead. He is torn between his uninvolved former life and the responsibilities of his future adventures. But in his decision to go on, Frodo grows in awareness. He has recognized the limited existence he knew in the Shire, by seeing the Ring as an outside symbol of power. In the Old Forest, he then experiences, for the first time, insecurity and fear as he stands before the unknown. Frodo's self-understanding is beginning to increase as his awareness of the outside world sharpens.

Before Frodo can recognize the evils of Sauron, the one-time master of the Rings, he must first experience the complete freedom from evil that exists in the woods of Lothlorien. Bilbo had once prepared Frodo for this when he sang of days gone by, "of yellow leaves and gossamer/ in autumns that there were,/ with morning mist and silver sun/ and wind upon [his] hair" (I, 364). The beauty of Lothlorien will be delicate and light, glowing with silver and gold. But this will only allow Frodo to see more clearly the thick and heavy darkness of the land of Mordor.

As Frodo travels to Lothorien he must go through the mountains of Caradhras. Here a violent snowstorm forces him to stop, and an effort is made to build a fire. He tries desperately to strike a flame that would hold in the swirling winds or catch in the wet fuel. Finally the wizard Gandalf thrusts the end of his staff into the midst of it. "At once a great spout of green and blue flames [springs up], and the wood [flares and sputters]" (I, 380). The green of hope and the blue of brighter days to come renew the spirits of Frodo and his companions. Here there is security in the face of disaster, strength instead of despair.

Caradhras is a place of natural balance. It has danger because of the snowstorm, yet the snow is a natural occurrence in the cold mountains. At the same time, it is a pass which must be crossed before the journey can continue, and therefore represents a forward motion. The two opposite realities which Frodo will soon encounter – Lothlorien and Mordor – are in this way brought together and foreshadowed. Lothlorien is the sum of everything good, captured, as it were, in an unreal freedom from evil. It is alive yet unchanging. Mordor is the sum of all evil, lying dead in its black existence, unable to change at all. Yet both these worlds give purpose and meaning to Frodo's quest.

The small party of travelers continues the journey, and the coming of night brings them closer to Lothlorien. In the dim light of the stars the trees arched over the road appear "grey, and their quivering leaves a hint of fallow gold" (I, 438). The beauty of this enchanted forest is serene, and as daybreak sheds light upon the land a profound blue fills the sky and the sun casts "long green shadows beneath the trees" (I, 454). Frodo gazes in wonder at what seems to be a "vanished world" (I, 454), and wanders deeper into the forest where "the floor of the wood is golden, and golden is the roof, and its pillars are of silver" (I, 434).

The colors of Lothlorien are hardly ordinary; they glisten with gold and silver. Here Frodo "saw no color but those he knew, gold and white and blue and green, but they were fresh and poignant, as if he had at that moment first perceived them" (I, 455). The colors do not fade or fall into forgetfulness. It is here that Frodo learns the true, the ideal value of good as it stands before evil. It is precious, beyond price, and the person who once possesses it will cherish the memory of it forever. Frodo is becoming keenly aware of his surroundings and of the reality of his quest.

This awareness is shown more clearly when Frodo looks into the Mirror of Galadriel, queen of Lorien. The Mirror reveals "things that were, and things that are, and things that yet may be" (I, 468). As he gazes into its clear surface, Frodo distinguishes scenes which "in some way [he] knows to be parts of a great history in which he has become

involved'' (I, 471). But suddenly the Mirror grows completely dark, and in ''the black abyss there [appears] a single Eye that slowly [grows], until it fills nearly all the Mirror'' (I, 471).

The Eye is that of Sauron, and its appearance represents a turning point in the novel. It symbolizes the evils of the past and the darkness of the future, which only Frodo can change by his possession of the Ring. The Eye, too, is a symbol of reality, like the cubist collages of Picasso, standing in stark contrast to the unreal and transformed picture behind it. But it is a reality which brings the illusive beauty of Lothlorien out of fairytale fantasy, and into a clearer perception of truth. Both the Eye and Lothlorien are real, and each can be seen only in contrast to the other. With the realization of this, Frodo's vision deepens. His ''sight is grown keener'' and he has perceived these ''more clearly than many that are accounted wise'' (I, 473). As a remembrance Galadriel, gives Frodo a phial of light, which he carries with him as a guide through the physical darkness of Mordor, and as a symbol of the inner sight he has found within himself. It is this light that remains with Frodo until the end, ever clear, never to fade or grow stale.

When Frodo passes into the valley of Mordor, the desolation is at once obvious. Brown and withered it looked ''as if fire had passed over [it], leaving no living blade of green: unfriendly waste without even a broken tree or a bold stone to relieve the emptiness'' (I, 492). Mordor is not only void of color, but also of life. Dark death rules the land, ''where [there are] great crevices and fissures blacker than the night, where forgotten winters [have] gnawed and carved the sunless stone'' (II, 405). A sullen redness, the only color in the dark bleakness, fills the sky and envelops the black tower of Sauron poised above the outer pass (II, 405). There is no warmth, no light, no life.

Frodo manages to pass through this terrible country, and climb Mount Doom, where even he is overcome by black despair. ''I am naked in the dark,'' he says, ''and there is no veil between me and the wheel of fire. I begin to see it even with my waking eyes and all else fades'' (III, 264). Mordor is filled with evil – an evil that is so penetrating nothing within it can ever change. Frodo is shaken by its horror, and can discern beauty and goodness no longer. But because he is only an observer, and not a partaker of its evil, he is able to go on, while the memories of this land are deeply etched in his mind.

The story of Frodo, however, does not end here. The Ring is destroyed, by a wretched creature who was its owner before Frodo, and the reign of Sauron is devastated as the ''skies burst into thunder seared with lightning [and] torrents of black rain'' (III, 276). The quest is fulfilled, but the changes that occur in Frodo remain with him always.

When Frodo does return to the Shire, he finds it overrun with the very evils he had risked his life to destroy. But in calming his initial anger, Frodo wakens to the realization of what he is fighting. He sees clearly the evil to be destroyed, and the life that has to go on in spite of it.

A new order is established in the Shire, but the experiences of Frodo make it impossible for him to remain there. He must go on and leave the friends and relationships he has grown to love. But all these become enclosed in a waking dream, as he sails down the High Sea in a white ship. And as he passes on into the West it seems to him that "the grey-curtained sea turns all to silver glass and [rolls] back, and he [beholds] white shores and beyond them a far green country under a swift sunrise" (III, 384). Frodo had passed into a "grey haven" (III, 383) where he held still the memories of both good and evil, but could see beyond them into a re-opened life of green springs and bright sunshine. Frodo can now pass into this new life knowing that he has brought the world, particularly his own world in the Shire, closer to a more complete existence.

The journey of Frodo, therefore, serves to unite the two diverse realities in Tolkien's trilogy – the world of good and the world of evil. As the journey progresses, the colors of each land symbolize both Frodo's realization of the realities facing him, and his acceptance of the changes they effect in his life. He begins his journey fresh and green with excitement, experiences the fading yellow of lost security, and grasps the fulness of the golden light of mature understanding, but only after he has passed through the darkness of confusion and despair. At the same time, Frodo has seen the need for change, the ability he has to change, and the responsibility he has to preserve what is valuable in life. Just as the prism reveals a distinct spectrum of color, so does Frodo's journey reveal a unique mixture of experiences. But only by seeing the progression as a whole, as a combination of interrelated colors or events, does it become meaningful. And through this understanding, Frodo is seen as an individual eager for the future, wise with the knowledge of the past, and alive with the realization of both.

Sunnet

Ridiculous sun, it seems
You're losing what it takes
To transmit light, or wake
The stars to a dimmer dream
And drive the night-mute birds to scream.
You rise so promising, fake,
And for an instant the world's awake
But knows not what it means
To have a warm descending
Brightness open the gray-
Brown sky to blue;
Or feel your handsome day unending;
Distinguish heavens from water way,
And really know the hue.

SISTER SARA MICHAEL, CSJ

Jello Songs

Yellow
Jello bounces.
Glim-shimmery, see-through,
And sunny, it wiggles waiting
Your spoon.

Green bright
Jello trembles,
Emeralding on silver
Till it twinkles . . . soft, slick, cool inside you.

The Red
Jello shivers,
Regally ruby, it
Reigns on a chilly china throne,
Laughing.

STEPHANIE LEWIS

Almost

Sun was supposed to shine today,
he promised grass he would.
Grass passed the news as she lay
cooly on the hill to dandelions who stood
with fuzzy white caps to keep themselves warm.
Almost-green blades knocked on wind
for the longest time, but wind continued to storm
and shout, not hearing, so blade cut in
eager to tell wind about sun.
and wind sighed . . .

then fled away
hurt and missed by no one
until sun was supposed to shine today
and they stared
for the longest time
at clouds
that wind had forgotten to blow away.

DOLORES ARAGON

A Thin Layer of Water

HELEN DWOJAK

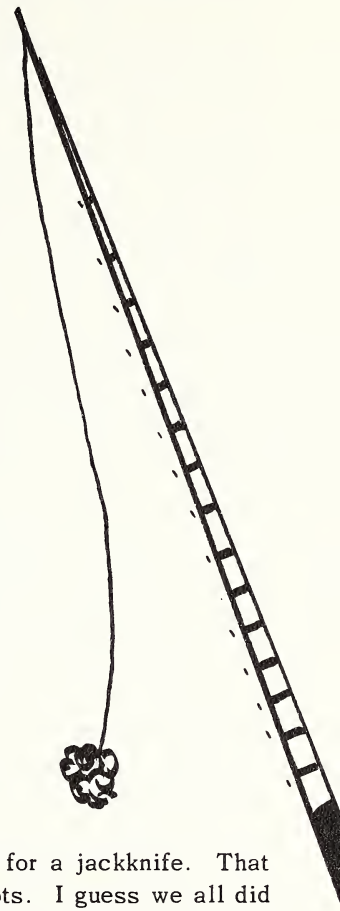
But he bought them for me anyway. He really couldn't afford it. I mean there were five of us, not counting my mother and him. He only made sixteen dollars a week and the boots cost eight. See, he mixed dyes in a place that made cloth. A mill you know. He just didn't make much money – sixteen dollars, that's all.

It was in the winter that he bought them. I was nine years old. It was a little while after my birthday. I remember because I got these really nice wool socks for my birthday, and when I got boots, I wore the socks with them. They were kind of white. Not the boots – the socks. They weren't really white, they were kind of yellowish like wool gets if it gets bleached in the wash. And they had green and red stripes on them that went up and down – not around. Well, never mind the socks, I started to tell you about the boots.

After school see, we used to go down to the river and fish. Not for fun I mean. Well, it was fun too, but see sometimes things weren't too easy for us. I'd bring the fish home and we'd have them for supper. Sometimes we'd even have them for breakfast. I mean things weren't really bad for us but we ate a lot of things I bet you never ate – like sour milk with potatoes and blood soup. Sounds bad huh? Listen, blood soup is really good. And have you ever had fried eels? A real delicacy. I know – you want to hear about the boots.

Well, in the winter the river was frozen and we had to cut holes in the ice so we could fish. The kids I went fishing with all came from families like mine. I mean their parents didn't have too much money either. So it was pretty important that we caught some fish. You know, Stonestown was just a small mill town then. Of course it's not much

bigger now, but it's grown some in the past few years. At that time though, most of the people were immigrants from the Old Country. They didn't make much money in the mills. A lot of them were farmers before they came here. But they couldn't get farms here so they worked in the mills. I guess that's not too important.



Well anyway, we used to fish from about four o'clock in the afternoon until six o'clock. Of course we wore really warm clothes, but your feet get really cold. I mean you get cold all over just squatting on the ice for a couple of hours. But boy do your feet get cold. I'm getting to the boots. Anyway, my feet used to get so cold that I couldn't feel them. I'd walk around like I wasn't touching the ground or anything. And when I'd get home, my mother would make me take my shoes off and rub my feet in front of the fire – until they came back. When they came back you'd wish they didn't.

On with the story. One day this kid, Red, everybody called him Red and I guess you know why. Right. Well anyway, he came out on the ice with these really nice boots on. They were high – almost to his knees. They didn't have any laces – they were the kind you pulled on your feet. The brown leather was kind of soft but the soles had really thick rubber on them – the kind of rubber that keeps you from slipping, you know. And you know what else they had? Well, on the outside of the right boot, near the top, there was a little pocket with a snap on it for a jackknife. That really knocked me out. I really wanted those boots. I guess we all did because everybody started talking at once. "Hey Red, where'd you get the boots?" "How much?" "Where'd you get the money?"

He was really excited too, "My pop got 'em for me. At George's. Eight dollars."

Bruce, he was my best friend and a real smart guy said, "Eight dollars. That's more than your pop makes in a month. Where'd you get 'em?"

"My dad got 'em for me. You don't know how much he makes. What do you know? He bought 'em for me." We all started laughing, even Bruce and Red. We were so excited that we raced all over the ice

for a while. We all almost broke our necks, except Red. He could really run with those boots on.

When I got home that night my feet were frozen as usual. Only that night, they felt worse because of Red's boots. I knew if I had those boots my feet wouldn't be so cold. But the real reason that I wanted them is that I just wanted them. Everyone was home except my brother Eddie. Nobody knew where he was, but that wasn't unusual. He's two years older than me and was kind of wild I guess. I mean he was really nice but he was always disappearing.

I really wanted to start a conversation about boots. But my sisters were all talking about a dance or something. They're all older than Eddie and me. Doris was asking my mother if she could have a new dress and the other two wanted new shoes. I knew I'd never get those boots. My dad was just sitting there looking tired.

After I finished thawing out my feet, we all sat down to eat supper. I toyed with the idea of bringing up the subject of boots. But I decided to wait. See, my dad was always kind of cranky until after he ate. Besides, my mother was talking to my sisters, "But Doris, we just can't afford it. Can't you wear Mary's pink one?"

"But I'm wearing that one Mother," said Mary. "That's why I need the shoes." Doris was seventeen and kind of heavy. In fact she'd never have gotten into that pink dress. Mary was a year younger, followed by Grace who was two years younger. Grace. She never has fit that name.

While they were all arguing, my father said to me, "Catch anything today?"

"Yeah, two fish and an old shoe," I answered. He didn't think that was very funny. He didn't even smile.

"Did you go to school today?" he asked.

"Yeah."

"Did you see Eddie?"

"Yeah." I looked down quickly.

"I mean did you see him at school?" He knew me pretty well.

"No," I answered. He just shook his head. I decided to start my attack. "Fell down real hard a couple of times today. That ice is really slippery."

"Yeah? Well, be careful. We got enough worries without doctor bills," he said.

That was a bad start and I knew it, but I decided to go on. "You know Red, Pop? His dad works at the mill. Red hair? You know him. Well, today, Red came fishing with some new boots on. Brown ones with thick rubber soles so you don't slip. His dad bought 'em for him. He didn't fall down at all."

"He didn't fall down," he said, only half-interested. "So?"

"Well, you know if I had some boots like that I wouldn't have to thaw my feet out when I got home, and I wouldn't fall down on the ice, and you wouldn't have any doctor bills, and – "

"Forget it. We don't have any money for boots," he said.

My mother must have heard us because she said, "What are you two talking about? Boots? Who wants boots?"

"No I don't," I said. "I was just talking about Red's new boots, that's all."

My mother looked at me very seriously and said, "Don't get it in your head that you're going to get boots. You've got nice, new warm socks and good shoes. Anyway, you know we can't afford it." I decided to let the matter drop.

After supper, Mom and my sisters went into the bedroom to settle the matter of clothes. My dad sat around for a while reading a paper about some dyes. When he finished, he started to get up saying, "How much do these boots cost?" I jumped a foot when I heard the word "boots."

"Eight dollars," I said. My heart was pounding.

"Eight dollars! That's half what I make in a week. What do they make 'em out of, gold?" He looked at me for a minute. Then he said, "You know I'd get 'em for you if I could don't you?"

"Yes," I answered. My heart was back to normal.

"Eight dollars is a lot of money you know."

"Yeah," I said.

"It's just too much – I'm sorry. You're a good kid," he said. He really was sorry and so was I for bringing it up.

The next day, after school I went fishing as usual. All the kids had the same look on their faces. What I mean is, we'd all had about the same luck the night before. And we weren't too happy to see Red that day either. When he walked out on the ice he looked around quickly to see if anyone had been lucky. When he saw that he was still the only one with boots, he walked over to where some of us were fishing and said, "Hi."

A few of us managed a "Hello."

Then he said, "Hey Bruce, where are your boots? Your dad must make at least eight dollars a month." We all looked at Bruce but he didn't answer. Some of the other kids told Red to take off. But he wouldn't leave Bruce alone. "Your dad must drink up eight dollars a week. How 'bout your mom? Naw, she doesn't have any money either. My mom bought me a knife to put in my boot pocket."

Bruce got up and walked over to Red. He stared into his face for

a couple of seconds. Then he said, "Why don't you and your boots go fish on thin ice." Red just laughed. Bruce turned quickly and walked off the ice. We didn't see him again that day. Well, needless to say, we were all pretty mad at Red. A couple of the bigger kids threatened to take him out to where the ice was breaking up and throw him in. He fished alone that day.

When I got home that night, my sisters were still arguing about what they were going to wear to the dance. Eddie had been home, but he had disappeared again. And my dad wasn't home yet. We figured that he had to work late. Just as we sat down to eat, he walked in. He was carrying a brown paper bag under his arm. He looked around the room for a minute. Then he looked at me. He looked tired as usual. He kept looking at me until I had to look away. He walked over and put the bag on the table in front of me.

"This is for you," he said. He went to the other side of the table and sat down. He kept looking at me. I mean like I'd done something wrong.

"For me," I said. I didn't even think of the boots. I thought there was something awful in the bag. So did everyone else. They were all looking at me, very seriously.

"You gonna open it? he asked, still staring.

"Yeah, sure I am," I answered. I was really on my guard. As I pulled back the paper I could see the soft, brown toe of a leather boot. I looked at him quickly. He was smiling. "For me?" I asked.

"For you," he answered. My mother and my sisters were craning their necks to see.

"Well, what is it?" my mother asked.

"It's boots," I answered.

"Boots!" she said, looking at my father. "Boots!" He was still looking at me and smiling.

"Well, take 'em out kid. Try 'em on. We gotta see if they fit," he said. He was almost as excited as I was.

I don't know where he got the money to buy them. I know my mother was surprised. She walked around for a few days, shaking her head and saying, "Boots!" I don't even remember if I thanked him or not. I know that he knew I was glad.

No, I don't have them anymore. In fact, I really didn't have them very long. See, as you know, in the spring the ice breaks up and floats down the river. As the ice melts you know, the river goes crazy. Sometimes it even overflows. Well, you guessed it. I fell in. No, I only lost one. I don't know how I fell in. But I did. I guess the ice just broke up under my feet. I went down like a lead weight with those boots on. What

I mean is, they were really heavy. The water wasn't very deep. But I was moving along pretty fast. I don't know how far I went. I only know that it was really cold. Anyway, I was moving along fast when my right boot toe hit something. I don't know what it caught on or if it just got stuck in the mud, but it just slipped off. You know, those boots were really tight before I fell in. The cold water must have loosened them or something.

As soon as I could get out of the water, I ran back to the place where I thought I'd lost it. I was out of my mind. All I kept thinking was, "He's really gonna be mad at me. He'll kill me – all that money." I had to find it. I tried to rake the bottom with branches. I even got in the water again – three times. When I was almost frozen, I started home.

By the time I got home, I was really frozen. When I opened the back door I felt like I'd been hit in the stomach. They were all sitting down eating supper. I felt my face get hot when they all looked up – except my dad. "What happened to you?" my mother demanded. I didn't answer. I must have looked pretty bad. I just stood there soaking – a boot on one foot and a green and red sock on the other. I kept staring at my dad. Finally, he looked up. He looked tired as usual. I tried to brace myself against the wall. He stared at me for a long time – a couple of seconds I guess.

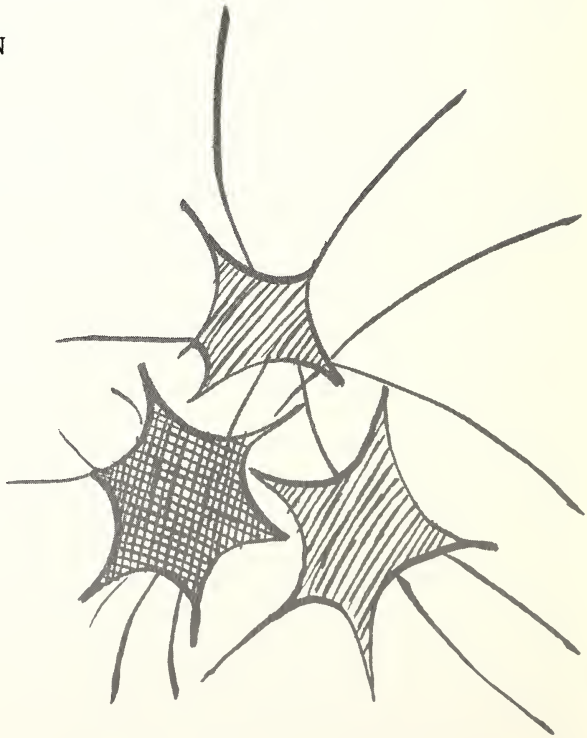
Then, he smiled slightly and said, "Go change your clothes and come eat your supper."

Those things cost eight dollars you know. No, I never got another pair. But you have to understand. Eight dollars. There were seven of us, you know. And he only made sixteen dollars a week. He just couldn't afford it. But he bought them for me anyway.

Death of a Leaf

Slowly it tumbled, brown and brittle
rested for a second on a cottonwood sprout
then began again to weave in and out
of the air. But as it circled a little
above the fat yellowing mound,
a sudden wind rushed it high above the tree
and set it spinning on a spree
across the acres, no longer bound
to any branch. Unleashed, and smoothly flying,
the leaf could not have regretted dying.

DOLORES ARAGON



The Widow's Walk

Sharing a veil of unshed tears with Trojan women,
They bow before a future altar holding weeds
Of barren hope in ringless hands and use tall
Centuries to test the depth of all their nights
As a waning tide wades through silence to an endless
Sea, whispering faint rumors of infinity.

ROMAYNE DOWD

The Seagulls Never Sleep

LIL MILEWSKI

Dawn pasted daylight over the stars and the village woke. Along the sea's edge the beach unwound like a kite's tail that curves with the currents of air. The sun lay low above the slender line of mainland penciled on the horizon.

It was a day sleek as a cat, and the air hung warm and soft. Only a small wind wrinkled the sea. The boats were already out, their heavy paddles moving slowly like tiny, two-legged waterbugs. Men pulled in fat barracuda before their fingers were grooved with the taut line. Shouting clipped the air when the nets were drawn in, heavy with fish glinting sunlight from wet scales.

Uneven rows of cottages tangled the frayed edges of beach. White as dove's eggs they lay in a nest of sunlight, growing big with life as the morning grew.

Women came to fill the lines with clean wash; children skittered in and out of the narrow yards and streets. A knot of girls in the boat yards giggled as a pigtail showing gave away a hiding place.

Liatta sat up in her low cot, drowsily listening to the gulls crack the day air. She caught their cries like overripe fruit fallen from a sky-tree, and her small mouth wrinkled up into a grin. She knew the sound of seagulls as she knew the smell of sea and fish that was with her brother Keb.

Keb was tall with hard shoulders. Liatta had many times felt them moving up and down beneath her when he lifted her on his back to race along the beach. If she looked down then she saw flakes of foam spinning under her. But she always looked at the sky and told Keb to follow the seagulls.

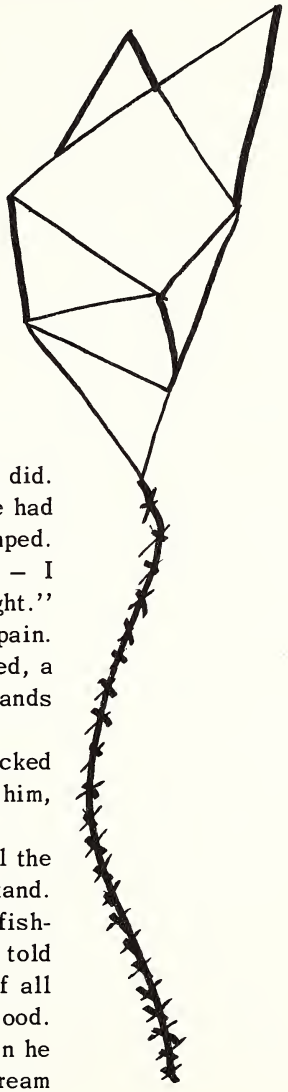
She reached under the sheets then to rub her bruised knee, and remembered last night.

As always, the sun had been just slipping behind its cover of sea when the two figures, Liatta's in miniature, raced down to the sea's edge after dinner. Keb would shoot her through the air like a seagull, and then tickle her until she was helpless. He would laugh softly when she begged him to stop, and his eyes were clear as daylight.

But last night she had been angry and had jumped from his high shoulders like a small animal, clinging to the ground. She had wanted Keb to fly higher, and catch her in the wind like a leaf. She wanted to fly to a filmy pink cloud that drifted on the fiery horizon. She imagined herself sitting on the cloud's softness, pulling the pink film apart and dropping its threads down to earth.

But Keb had only said "Come on, Liatta," the way he always did when the sun was that low.

"Time for home and bed, Liatta. Seagulls sleep early and you are keeping them up."



But she hadn't believed him. She never did. Her dark eyes had snapped back boldly, and she had bruised her knee on the driftwood when she jumped.

"I don't believe seagulls ever sleep – I wouldn't either if I could fly over the sea all night." She lay on the ground, her face a tight fist of pain.

"We must all sleep, Liatta," Keb answered, a cloud in his grey eyes. He bent, offering his hands to her.

"I don't care." Liatta ignored him and picked herself up quickly. She had run home ahead of him, limping a little.

Now as she sat in bed she could still feel the anger heavy inside her. Keb should understand. Didn't he spend the whole day out on the water fishing side by side with the seagulls? Hadn't he told her once that the seagulls had the best life of all because they had the sky to live in? He understood. She had seen the daylight flash in his eyes when he watched the gulls, and she alone knew of his dream

to join a fishing fleet on the mainland for a two years' run under the open sky. He understood, yet he always took her home early.

But already she had wasted a night sleeping. She felt the grooved wooden floor with her toes and slid from the cot's edge. She pulled off her nightgown and stuffed it into her closet behind the dresses. She took out a faded green cotton, stuck her head and arms through quickly, and bent to strap on a pair of worn sandals creviced with sand and tar.

In the kitchen, Liatta's mother stood over the heavy wood table, a pot and ladle in her hands. Her father and brother Jola sat facing one another at the table. Keb's chair was empty.

"Bring a bowl out for yourself, Liatta," her mother called. She was a brusque, busy woman and her first greeting in the morning was usually an order.

"Momma," Liatta announced, "I'm going to the beach to play today while Jola and Keb are fishing."

"You're going to turn into a crab, Liatta, you spend so much time at the beach" Jola teased, pointing his bread at her small face.

"Oh Jola, you have fish in your head for brains. I won't be a crab – I'll be a seagull, flying way up to the clouds!" Liatta swung her hand into the air, narrowly missing the old china milk jug.

"Watch, Liatta, or I'll be flying you upstairs instead for a good strapping if you break that jug." Her mother's eyes narrowed sharply. Then anxious darkness filled them.

"And be quiet, Liatta. Keb is sick today and can't fish." Her mother's brow was a worried line across her forehead.

Her husband leaned over to touch his wife's arm and spoke low.

"Wait, mother, there's no need for worry. Keb will get a little rest and he'll be fishing again before you know." Then he turned to Liatta.

"No noise for Keb, hear?"

Then he and Jola rose with a scraping of wooden chairs on stone. Lunch sacks were tucked under arms and Liatta's mother stood in the door. The two men were in the street, shirts bright with sunlight, then growing smaller in the distance.

"Clean up now, Liatta," her mother reminded, just as Liatta had pushed away her empty mug and risen eagerly. The green dress danced from kitchen to sink until the table was clear. Then she remembered Keb.

Would he be well enough to take her to the beach tonight?

She ran to poke her small, dark head into his room. Keb's room was tiny, but filled with intrigue. There was a big ship on one shelf that he had made himself from shells, and Liatta's eyes always caught here first. Many hours he and Liatta had spent on the beach picking only the

perfect shells that were smooth and large. It was then that Liatta discovered that the sea was a world beyond any she had known, and from then she had chosen to live there. Those days of searching among waves and birds had built something larger than a shell ship. The finished ship was a great schooner under full sail with masts, hull and sails all carved from shells. Beneath it were stacked piles of books in every size and color whose pages puzzled Liatta, but charmed her too. For Keb said they told about all that was across the sea in Italy, and even about a place called Africa. Keb said people there were black and would think her strange for being white! All this was there somehow inside the books and Keb promised to show her how to see it as he could.

Then Keb stirred a little. He wasn't like himself at all, thought Liatta. Today his eyes were cloudy and his shoulders looked small beneath the sheets. Something moved in her like the soundless rustle of leaves.

"Keb, why are you sick?" She couldn't help whispering, the room was so still.

"Why don't you find out from the seagulls? Don't they tell you everything?" Keb's voice was tight, and she hardly knew its harshness. She stood still, tensed.

"No, I can't give you rides tonight so go." Keb turned his face away but his eyes had softened to the color of the day sky.

Liatta ran out.

The sand was cool and wet, ready to welcome her toes. All over the sky the thin whipped clouds were barricades to the blue behind. Near the horizon the clouds were piled like suds over a sea stretched smooth as fine silk. But the seagulls were the grand finale.

Liatta had never seen so many together on a morning. Up and down the beach they strutted, clacking together like the women who met for washing to talk of troubles and went home laughing at themselves. But when the birds took to the sky in great numbers with wings moving, then still, carried on a current of breeze – that was a marvel Liatta had only dreamed in the marvels of ships and books. She had imagined such power somewhere among those places Keb spoke of, but never here, running free in the sky. It was magic on tiptoe high in the air.

Then Liatta heard a cry. Low at first, and barely there, it seemed to come from just beyond a ridge of sand. Liatta was startled, then curious, forgetting the majesty of the gulls to look for the one, small sound. It was eerie to expect something to appear – some source for the small voice in an expanse of sand that lay wide and empty around her.

Then she found it, a seagull lying on its side on the ruffled surface of sand. She approached it politely, awkwardly, with the embarrassment

of a woman revealing a cherished memory to find it old and stale. It was a seagull: its home was air and a vast space she could never touch. Now she was an intruder, a thief.

The gull struggled in the sand, its round eyes glittering in fright as she came nearer. It beat its wings helplessly trying to lift itself, then fell back on the sand.

Liatta could not tell what was wrong. She took the gull carefully into her lap, rocking her body gently to soothe its fright.

"What's the matter? Why can't you fly? Poor seagull."

She pleaded with it, every movement of the listless wings touching her like a cold hand.

"Come on, you can fly!" Liatta knew there could be no reason why the gull was not in the sky, shouting beauty.

An unexpected wind came up about midday that brought the boats in with only a half-day's work. The waves built up like giants and fell heavily on the beach. The flocks of seagulls were gone.

At last the gull lay still. Liatta had felt no warmth in it for a long time. She carried the bird to a slight dip between two sand hills and placed it there, smoothing sand over it evenly. She walked home past the loud waves, looking down at the prints her sandals left in the sand.

Inside the rooms looked dim after the sun's glare. In the kitchen her mother stood tiredly over a pot, and her hands were rough. Then Liatta went in to sit in Keb's room where he lay asleep. She dropped her hands palms up in her lap. And she cried.

Awards

ATLANTIC NATIONAL PRIZES

LINDA CAGGIANO	Third. Story: *A smell of Honeysuckle*
KATHY HAVERICK	Third. Poem: *The Immoralist*
JOYCE HAMPEL	Fifth. Essay: *A Hobbitual Spectrum*
BARBARA BENEFIEL	Honorable Mention. Essay: *Hell and Humanism*
MARYANN RUSSO	Honorable Mention. Poem: *Advent of the Wind*
KATHY KIMBALL	Honorable Mention. Essay: *Drink Me, Eat Me*
MARIA GUTIERREZ	Honorable Mention. Essay: *Undset's Seasons in Reverse*
THERESA CULLEN	Honorable Mention. Essay: *Long Journey into Light: Joyce and Dante*
SR. MARIA HAUNFELDER	Honorable Mention. Poem: *Song for Naomi*
SR. MARTIN EILEEN	Honorable Mention. Essay: *Shadow To Smoke*
THERESA KEELER	Merit. Essay: *Shadows of Dusk and Dawn in Tolkien*
HELEN DWOJAK	Merit. Story: *Summer's Haze and Winter's Light*
MARGARET McCLEAN	Merit. Essay: *Wind Power*
MICHELE TOMAC	Merit. Essay: *The Wonderful Worlds of Tolkien*
JEANNE BURNHAM	Merit. Poem: *Why More Cat Poems than Dog?*
LINDA CAGGIANO	Merit. Poem: *As Icarus*
CAROL HUBER	Merit. Essay: *Frodo Learns Compassion*
MARIE MAYOTTE	Merit. Essay: *The Delectable Mountains*
MARY PURCELL	Merit. Poem: *Love Ruptures Raw*
LILLIAN MILEWSKI	Merit. Essay: *Freedom and Narrowness*